



Casualty Services Program

The Commander's Role in Casualty Events

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OVERVIEW

AFPC



- Casualty event definition
- Commander's role in various casualty scenarios

DEFINITION

AFPC



- A casualty event is:
 - Any occurrence where a servicemember is lost to the organization through
 - Illness
 - Injury
 - Missing
 - Death

SCENARIO 1

AFPC



- Airman dies in an automobile accident
 - Base Security Forces are notified by local authorities
 - Desk Sergeant informs:
 - Installation Commander
 - Member's Squadron Commander
 - Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR)
 - In this example, spouse and children reside in local area

SCENARIO 1 (Cont'd)



- Commander's Role
 - Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) will provide notification guidance
 - You notify NOK in person
 - Take along a chaplain and medical representative, if available
 - Consider taking a friend of the family
 - Provide known circumstances
 - Determine who will notify other family members
 - Advise CAR of decision

SCENARIO 1 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- Advise NOK that an Air Force representative will contact her/him within 24 hours to make a casualty assistance visit
- CAR will explain and assist family members in claiming benefits and entitlements

SCENARIO 1 (Cont'd)

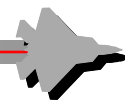
AFPC



- Next duty day provide CAR with information on:
 - Any marital discord
 - Any records of misconduct or investigation

- This information helps determine if a CSAF condolence letter is appropriate
 - Letters are prepared by HQ AFPC Casualty Services Branch

SCENARIO 1 (Cont'd)



- **Send a circumstance/condolence letter within 5 calendar days--Be careful!**
 - Circumstances not necessary if already informed
 - Have CAR review the letter prior to dispatch for compliance with AFI 36-3002
 - Maintain copy for your records
- **Remain available to family**
- **Maintain contact with Military Personnel Flight Commander and CAR to assist in resolving claims or problems**

SCENARIO 2

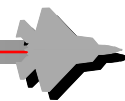
AFPC



- **F-15 pilot ejects during over-water mission**
 - SAR finds debris but not pilot
- **A group of airmen go on a fishing trip and one falls out of boat into swift, deep, frigid waters**
 - Local authorities initiate a SAR operation

SCENARIO 2 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- **Contact CAR for guidance in placing member in Duty Status-Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN)**

DUSTWUN: *is a 10-day transitory casualty status used by*

commanders when they suspect a member's absence is

involuntary and member may be a casualty. The commander

does not feel there is sufficient evidence to make a determination of missing or deceased

- **Notify member's family of status and SAR**

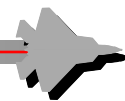
SCENARIO 2 (Cont'd)



- **Provide family and CAR with daily SAR updates**
 - **Extent of search, participants and findings**
 - **When SAR discontinued, (e.g., weather) why, and when it will resume**
 - **Witness statements, if available**
 - **Estimation of how long airman could survive**

- **CAR submits daily search progress report to HQ AFPC Casualty Services Branch**

SCENARIO 2 (Cont'd)



- **Within 10 days, you, with the help of your legal staff, medical, OSI, Security Forces, must decide between three possible determinations:**
 - **Death**
 - **Missing**
 - **Absent Without Leave (AWOL) / Deserter**
 - **Returned to Military Control (RMC)**

SCENARIO 2 (Cont'd)



- **Death determination is appropriate when evidence indicates death is the only plausible explanation for member's absence**
 - **Recovery of remains is not a prerequisite**
- **CAR submits proper casualty reports**
- **CAR provides casualty assistance as indicated in Scenario 1**

SCENARIO 2 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- **If, after 10 days, the situation indicates the member could have survived, the commander must:**
 - **Consult with AFPC Missing Persons Branch prior to placing member in missing status--to determine proper subcategory**
 - **Submit AF Form 484, Missing Persons Supplemental Report 5 days after SAR is suspended**
 - **Invoke the Missing Persons Act -requires consultation with AFPC/DPWCM**

SCENARIO 2 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- **Choosing AWOL or Missing**
 - **Consider all factors good & bad**
 - ✦ **Outstanding worker/NCO**
 - ▢ **Out of character for member to go AWOL**
 - ▢ **Member had troubled relationships**
 - ▢ **Suspicious financial transactions**
 - ▢ **Remarks made to others**

SCENARIO 3

AFPC



- **Member injured while TDY**
 - **Family is not in the local area**
 - **The attending physician and medical treatment facility (MTF) commander determine family presence would aid in the recovery of the member and request Invitational Travel Orders (EFMTs)**
 - **2 family members**
 - **Not for compassionate reasons**
 - **AF pays for travel**

SCENARIO 3 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- **If member is able to communicate, honor the member's desires on family notification**
 - You may decide that notification is necessary even if member doesn't want to do it
- **If member is unable to communicate, all family members listed on the DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data, must be notified by either the:**
 - Commander
 - Primary next of kin (PNOK)
 - AFPC Casualty Services Branch

SCENARIO 3 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- **Notify family by telephone**
 - **Explain known circumstances and member's condition**
- **Provide medical update to family**
 - **If stationed overseas and family is in CONUS, or stationed in CONUS and family is overseas, AFPC Casualty Services Branch does the notification and medical updates**

SCENARIO 3 (Cont'd)

AFPC



- **Commander's Role**
 - **Meet family when they arrive**
 - **Assign a unit representative to act as a personal escort**
 - **Arrange for quarters and meals**
 - **Assist family where needed**
 - **Notify CAR when family is ready to return home**

SCENARIO 3 (Cont'd)

AFPC



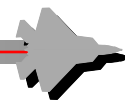
- **AFPC Casualty Services Branch makes all travel arrangements using N & N Travel**
- **Transportation costs are paid by AFPC Casualty Services Branch through a special account**
 - **Reimbursement to NOK who travel at their own expense prior to EFMT approval can be made**
 - **Again, incidental expenses such as food, lodging and local transportation are the responsibility of the family**
- **Don't obligate the Air Force**



- **Imminent Death**

- **When: Medical authorities believe the member's injuries or illness will cause or lead to death within 72 hours**
- **Why: In EVERY case it's ALWAYS financially advantageous for the survivors if the member dies in a retired status!**

SCENARIO 4 (Cont'd)



- **The two primary advantages are:**
 - **Survivor Benefit Plan: Provides beneficiary a monthly annuity up to 55 percent of the member's retired pay upon member's death**
 - ✦ **Retiree death - SBP options include spouse only coverage, spouse and child coverage, child only coverage, insurable interest coverage and Supplemental SBP coverage**
 - ▢ **When a member dies on active duty, SBP options are limited to spouse and children coverage and no Supplemental SBP is available**



- **National Service Life Insurance (NSLI):**
Members granted a service-connected disability may apply to the VA for up to \$10,000 life insurance coverage at standard insurance rates within 2 years of being rated disabled
 - **Members rated 100 percent disabled may apply for a waiver of premiums**
 - **Members eligible for the waiver may obtain an additional policy of up to \$20,000**
 - **But, premiums cannot be waived on the additional (\$20,000) insurance**

When In Charge - Take Charge!



- **CAR**
- **Use Commander's Call with emphasis on:**
 - **Virtual Record of Emergency Data (vRED)**
 - **SGLV 8286, Servicemember's Group Life Insurance (SGLI)**
 - **Invite CAR to explain what assistance will be provided to spouses and families**
- **Work with the experts in legal, security forces, OSI, chaplain and medical communities when faced with the tough decisions**



We are here to help



- **Call AFPC Casualty Services Branch any time you need additional assistance**
 - **Commercial 1-800-433-0048**
 - **DSN 665-3505**
- **We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**